

Please take these comments to heart:
Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. If Sinclair deems it necessary to bend over backwards to serve one particular political agenda (on PUBLIC airwaves), then be aware that there will be a great public outcry. Many citizens will not stand by and let smear campaigning take over, without a serious fight against Sinclair stations' license renewals.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. "Substantive" in this case could mean that if you air a blatantly anti-Kerry program, at least give the public a chance to see the other side of the coin as well: Air a program (perhaps directly before or after its conservative counterpart) such as "Going Upriver". Prove your stations to be marginally interested in upholding a high standard of integrity...Do Not tighten your fist around the truth, so that only what your financial contributors want to be seen is aired.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.